National Tribune.

"TO CARE FOR HIM WHO HAS BORNE THE BATTLE, AND FOR HIS WIDOW AND ORPHANS."

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ISLAND NUMBER TEN.

The First Success in Opening the Mississippi.

THROUGH THE SWAMPS

The Intrepid Soldiers Drag Their Wagons and Guns.

AT NEW MADRID.

A Lodgment Made and Active Operations Begun.

BY MAJ.-GEN. JOHN POPE, UNITED STATES ARMY, ST. LOUIS, MO.

I.

As the operations for the reduction of Island No. 10, and the destruction thereby of the first serious resistance made by the Confederates to the navigation of the Mississippi River, were unique, as well as eminently successful, they furnish an episode in the history of our civil war solitary of its kind, and worthy, therefore, to have its own record and to be studied by military men. An attempt was subsequently made to repeat these operations at Vicksburg, but it failed, as Gen. Grant has explained.

In the early part of February, 1862, the enemy's forces in the West occupied a fortified line from Bowling Green on the east to the Mississippi River at Columbus on the west. On the 16th of February Gen. Grant broke this line by the capture of Forts Henry and Donelson. His operations and their success in the capture of these two forts compelled the evacuation of Columbus, which, though strongly fortified, was turned by the advance of Gen. Grant up the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers. This result had been apprehended by the Confederate Generals for some time, and Gen. Beauregard, who was in command in that section of country, selected Island No. 10, 60 miles below Columbus, as the point where the navigation of the Mississippi was first to be contested. The place was strongly fortified, and further protected from open assault by its insular character. Its garrison, including the troops on the mainland, directly south, at New Madrid, consisted of about 9,000 men, and the earthworks at the Island and at New Madrid were

ARMED WITH 150 HEAVY GUNS.

In order that this account of the operations against these places may be clearly understood, some brief description of the topography of the immediate locality is necessary.

The Mississippi River, flowing south from Columbus, makes suddenly, and at a distance of 60 miles south, a sharp bend to the west and returns almost on its course toward the northwest. At the bottom or southern point of this abrupt turn of the river lies Island No. 10—a small island, about a mile and a half long by half a mile wide—placed in the channel about a third of the way from the south or left shore to the north shore. The main channel of the river is between the Island and the northern bank. Leaving the Island the river runs to the northwest about six miles, to New Madrid, the most northerly point of the bend. At New Madrid it makes another sharp turn to the southwest and thence south, returning at Tiptonville, nine miles below, to a point within four miles by land of Island No. 10. Beginning some distance above the Island, and on the left bank of the river, an immense swamp and lake puts out from the river and extends about three miles inland, thence to a point below Tiptonville, where it re-enters the main river. The swamp and lake are known as Reelfoot Lake. Tiptonville, at the lower end of the swamp, as also all the land in the great bend between that place and the Island, is itself an island, the Mississippi being on three sides and Reelfoot Lake on the fourth.

From Island No. 10 and the strip of land on the mainland south of it there is no communication with the interior, except by a small flatboat, which plies across Reelfoot Lake about two miles, through an opening cut in the cypress swamps for the purpose. The only means to supply Island No. 10 and its garrison on the mainland was by steamboat, and as soon as navigation was interrupted by

THE CAPTURE OF NEW MADRID,

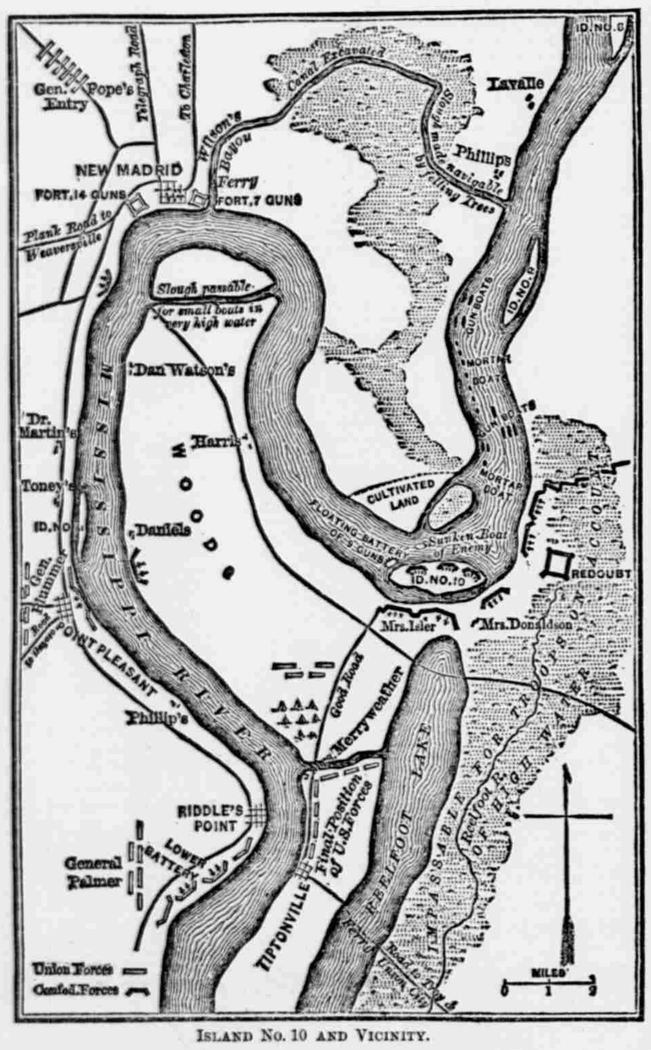
the boats landed below Tiptonville and the supplies were hauled in wagons four miles across the peninsula to the Island. Supplies and reinforcements or escape, except in very small parties, was impossible on the land side. One mile below Tiptonville begin the great swamps, which line both sides of the river for 60 miles below, and which make access to the interior impracticable on either side of the river during high water. Almost exactly the same condition existed on the north side of the river opposite the Island. A narrow strip of dry land follows all around the bend near to the river, but beyond this lie the interminable swamps, which line also the west side of the river for at least 50 miles above New Madrid. This town itself is on the narrow strip of dry land near the river bank, and northeast, north, and west of it are the great swamps.

The garrison of Island No. 10, both on the Island and on the mainland, was absolutely cut off from the interior, except by the little ferryboat I have mentioned, and was wholly dependent on the river for supplies and reinforcements. While it was entirely secure against attack from the interior or land side, it had the great disadvantage of being unable to escape in that direction should the Union forces succeed in crossing the river at New Madrid or below in sufficient strength. The enemy knew, of course, that we could not cross without boats, and they believed that their batteries on the Island and their gunboats below it would prevent even the gunboats from descending the river.

In this condition of things they deemed themselves secure, especially during the season of high water. The whole country north of New Madrid, nearly as far up as the little town of Commerce, on the Mississippi, is an

IMMENSE AND DISMAL SWAMP,

and at the time of these operations was overflowed by the river, so that the water was from two to ten feet deep over the whole of it. An old corduroy road in wretched condition, on the top of an embankment which was broken in a hundred places, extended part of the way from Commerce to New



ISLAND NO. 10 AND VICINITY.

Madrid, but it had not been repaired for years and was nearly impassable. The swamp was known as the Great Mingo, or "Nigger-wool" Swamp. It was thought wholly impracticable to take wagons or artillery through it.

In considering the position and the measures necessary to reduce a system of defense so strong, it became apparent that some point on the river below the Island must first be occupied, and batteries planted to prevent steamboat communication from below. That done, it would be easy to push our advance down to a position opposite Tiptonville, which was the lowest point of dry land along the river for many miles. By preventing steamboats from landing at Tiptonville all communication with the Island would be closed to the Confederates, except by crossing Reelfoot Lake and swamp which, as I have explained, was impracticable for military stores or for the passage of men, except in very small parties, and with long delay. Having accomplished this, every effort was to be made to get boats in which to cross the river in force sufficient to capture the Confederate garrison.

The first thing to be done, therefore, was to attack and occupy a position below the Island, and in this view New Madrid presented the most practicable point. It was known to be occupied by the enemy in force. It was also known that the high waters of the Mississippi had flooded to the depth of several feet the great Mingo Swamp to the north, and made a passage across it next to impossible.

Such was the problem and such the conditions of it when I was directed, on the 14th of February, 1862, to report to Gen. Halleck, in St. Louis, to undertake its solution. I was at Jefferson City, Mo., when the order reached me, and I at once reported in St. Louis. On the 18th Gen. Halleck presented the subject to me, and after some conversation asked me if I thought it practicable to open the river by capturing or otherwise reducing Island No. 10, and whether I would

BE WILLING TO UNDERTAKE IT.

I accepted the duty, and by Gen. Halleck's order began to organize a force for the purpose. He promised me everything at his command that I might need, and assured me that I could rely upon his cordial support. His action during the subsequent operations at Island No. 10 justified these assurances.

I went first to Cairo, at the mouth of the Ohio, which was at that time the base of supplies for the force under Gen. Grant, and was besides an important strategic point in view of further military operations in that section.

At the time I left St. Louis, Feb. 19, there was apprehension at military headquarters that the enemy at Columbus, Ky., was preparing, before final evacuation of the place, to make an assault on Cairo, which was feebly garrisoned. I was instructed, therefore, by Gen. Halleck, that if I found anything to indicate such a movement I should assume the command there until all danger was over, before entering upon the movement against New Madrid.

On the 21st of February, finding that the apprehension of an attack at Cairo was groundless, I left there in a steamboat with a guard of 140 men, and landed at the little village of Commerce, on the Mississippi, 30 miles above, and on the west side of the river. Commerce was selected as the point to organize my force for the advance on New Madrid, because it was at the first point of the bluffs which impinged on the river above that place, and the only road toward New Madrid from the north—the wretched corduroy road heretofore mentioned—left the river at that place. Commerce is about 50 miles by land above New Madrid. The bluffs, however, barely touch the river at that one point and retreat from it immediately below, leaving the great Mingo Swamp at least 30 miles wide toward the west, and extending all the way to New Madrid and many miles below it.

It was dark on the night of Feb. 21 when I landed at this little village with the escort mentioned. Regiments were sent to me rapidly from St. Louis, Cairo and Cincinnati. Most of them were

ENTIRELY GREEN REGIMENTS

just enlisted, and having arms placed in their hands for the first time when they embarked to join me. Very few of them had ever served at all. Even those which had served had done so separately, and had never been even assigned to brigades.

I was obliged to organize this force *ab initio*, a difficult and troublesome task. So efficient, however, was the assistance I received from Gens. Stanley, Hamilton, Palmer and Granger, that within one week after I landed nearly alone at Commerce we marched south with a well-equipped force, ready to do and capable of doing the work before it.

This organization was the nucleus of the army corps afterward designated the "Army of the Mississippi," widely known and greatly distinguished [illegible] the West for its discipline, its gallantry [illegible] its effectiveness, and the

REPAIRING THE CORDUROY.

soldierly and cordial good feeling which prevailed among both men and officers. It is not only proper, but I consider it a duty, to record here that during my whole experience in the army, I have never seen troops, either in large or in small bodies, with which that small army would not compare on terms of advantage. To the mobility and "esprit," the courage in battle and patience under excessive exposure and fatigue; to the good will for each other and regard for their commanders, their subsequent services and their reputation, even when broken up as an organization and distributed to other corps and other armies, amply testify.

I cannot even at this day think of that little army and my relations to it as its commander, without emotions which could not be properly expressed in such a paper as this. As long as I live I shall not cease to remember it, nor fail to acknowledge the deep gratitude I owe it for its cordial support whilst I commanded it, and for its earnest and avowed sympathy with and confidence in me in the darkest hours of my life afterward. I esteem it my greatest honor to have belonged to that little army, and look upon every officer and soldier of it as a personal friend, from whom

NOTHING CAN EVER ESTRANGE ME.

On the 28th we marched from Commerce. The day was cold and wintry, a drizzling snow and rain falling upon us. Almost immediately on leaving the village we entered upon the corduroy road which led through the swamp, which, with two or three dry places of limited extent, spread out before us all the way to New Madrid. The camp measles, a familiar enemy to all soldiers of the war, broke out among us, and I was, myself, one of the first victims. Fortunately the attack was not severe, and, well wrapped up, I was able to ride my horse part of each day.

We toiled and struggled through deep mud and water, repairing as often as was absolutely necessary the broken corduroy road and the crumbling embankment along which it was built. The drizzling rain was succeeded during the day by a driving snow, and the temperature by no means mitigated the disinclination to plunge into the water every few miles to push forward the wagons or to mend the embankments.

Patiently and steadily, without complaint, and with the cheerful faces which our men always wore when there was a prospect of a fight ahead, we waded and trudged for three of the most disagreeable days I ever passed. The men and animals were cased in mud more inches in thickness than I would venture to tell, and if there had been any way of melting them out of their mud envelopes without breaking the casing, we could have presented a complete and striking collection of dirt-colored statues of the Army of the Mississippi. Although there was "water, water everywhere," and plenty of it to drink, no one considered it worth while to wash in it, for the very short time the effects would last.

We bivouacked for the night on a patch of dry ground called Hunter's farm, much after dark, some of the command not being able to get there before midnight. The next morning I directed Gen. Hamilton to send the 7th Ill. Cav., under the command of Col. Kellogg, to scout for Gen. M. Jeff Thompson, an irregular sort of Confederate, known in that section as the "Swamp Fox," who seemed to operate on his own account, but who was reported to have with him several hundred men and two or three small—very small—guns. It was understood that he had taken up a position on a narrow place in the causeway in front of us, and intended to oppose our advance. Col. Kellogg found him thus posted, with his "artillery" planted on the causeway, and at once

RODE OVER HIM WITHOUT EVEN STOPPING

to form his command. Gen. Thompson's command melted away and fled from the ground, each one for himself, leaving the "artillery" in our hands. It was extremely funny and not at all dangerous, and furnished the command with amusement for several days.

At length, on the 3d of March, after nearly four days wading and dragging wagons and artillery by hand, we debouched on the dry lands and cornfields near New Madrid. It was a small village, having generally a population of about a thousand, but at this time was practically abandoned by its inhabitants. I found the defensive works at and below the place occupied by five regiments of infantry and several companies of artillery. These works consisted of one bastioned earthwork half a mile below the town, on which were mounted 14 heavy guns, and a larger irregular work at the upper end of the town, armed with seven heavy guns. These two works, with the lines of intrenchments between them, constituted the land defenses of the place. In addition six gunboats, carrying from four to eight heavy guns each, were anchored close against the shore between the upper and lower redoubts.

The country for miles around the place is almost a dead level, the highest line being directly along the bank of the river, from which it descends very gradually toward the swamps. The river was very high and almost on a level with the banks, so that the guns on the gunboats looked easily over the banks and completely commanded the country within their reach.

Thus the approaches to the town were covered by the crossfire of at least 60 pieces of heavy artillery. The enemy's pickets were promptly driven in, and under cover of our skirmishers we made a sufficient reconnoissance of the place to confirm the information acquired before from other sources. The troops went into camp just on the edge of the swamp, and hardly beyond long range of the enemy's guns.

We could, beyond doubt, have stormed these works by open assault. Our troops, though green in service, were full of courage and spirit, and could have been safely relied on to do the work; but such a movement would have been

ATTENDED WITH HEAVY LOSS,

which could not and should not have been justified, in view of the certainty that by short delay the place would be taken with little loss to us. The delay was simply for the purpose of sending to Cairo for a few heavy guns, which I felt certain we could drag by hand through the swamps and along the causeway.

They were sent for, and whilst waiting their arrival forced reconnoissances and several feints of an advance in force were kept up, as much to accustom our troops to act promptly and coolly under fire as for any harm to the enemy. Meantime the enemy continued to reinforce New Madrid from Island No. 10 until on the 12th of March they had on the redoubts and trenches, and on the gunboats, not less than 8,000 or 9,000, according to the information received from within their lines. The enemy's fleet consisted of nine gunboats, under command of Commodore Hollins. The land forces were commanded by Gens. McCown, Stewart and Gantt.

On the 11th of March the heavy guns were delivered at Cairo to Col. Bissell, of the Engineer regiment, whom I had sent for them. They were at once brought forward, dragged part of the way by hand, and reached our camp on the night of the 12th. During that same night the 10th and 16th Ill., under Col. Morgan, were pushed forward under cover of the darkness to within 800 yards of the lowest redoubt of the enemy; and sufficient earthworks were thrown up by them

JEFF THOMPSON'S "ARTILLERY."

on which to mount our heavy guns, and short lines of trenches to shelter the immediate support of the battery. Before daylight the work was finished, and the guns were mounted in it. Stanley's Division was posted within supporting distance of the battery, and ready to meet any attempt of the enemy to sally out of his works to assault.

In such silence was all this work done that the enemy had not the least intimation of the construction of the battery directly in front of his principal work, nor that we had received any heavy guns. In fact, they had no idea that heavy guns could be brought

THROUGH THE SWAMPS AT ALL.

The roar of our heavy guns at dawn of day carried to the enemy the first knowledge he had of either guns or earthworks. Our fire was promptly replied to by all of the enemy's heavy artillery on land and water, and for a time the din was tremendous. Capt. J. A. Mower, 1st U. S. Inf., was in immediate charge of the siege-guns, which were served by the two companies of the 1st U. S. Inf. under his command. Having but a small supply of ammunition for heavy guns, I directed Capt. Mower to concentrate his fire first on the gunboats, and when they were driven off, on the lower fort. The guns were served with admirable rapidity and skill. In a few hours several of the gunboats hauled off, and three of the heavy guns in the enemy's main work were dismounted. The cannonading was continued furiously all day by the enemy's batteries and gunboats, without any damage, except disabling one of the 24-pound guns in our battery. Meantime our trenches were being advanced and extended, and it was my purpose, under cover of night, to push forward the heavy battery much nearer to the enemy's works. During the day demonstrations were made against the works at the upper end of the town, but with no purpose to make a serious assault.

[*To be continued.*]

BARBARA FRITCHIE.

BY L. Q. J.

Up from te valleys green mit yellow corn
Vhat stoodt up straighdt in te early morn,

Vhen de repels stretchedt dtheir draitor necks,
Do see vhat they soomtimes soon expects

Mit dot Frederick blace vhat sthand so sthill
Und quiedt do see vhat vas dthier royal vill.

Roundt dot nice leedle town was pig apple drees,
Vhat schmell mighty sweedt do te honey pees,

Und make dot blace von garten of te Lord
Do dot grazy und hungry repel horde.

Vell so, on dot nice day when all vas so fine,
Vhen Lee marched along his repel line

Ofer dot roadt vinding te mountain down
Mit foot und horseback indo Frederick town

Dere vas seen 40 Johnny pattleflags
Flapping in de vind like crimson rags,

Und shining in te sun of dot early morn—
But dthey vas all nix py te hour of noon.

Pefore dot, some repel soldiers hauled down
A Yankee flag from a roof of Frederick town,

Und not anypody in all dot blace
Dare shook his nose in te repels' face;

But Barbara Fritchie of Frederick town
Took up dot flag vat de repels hauled down,

Und stuck it fast do her vindow-sill,
Do show dem scamps dot she loved it sthill.

Py dot dime, up te streedt vas heardt te trendt
Of repels, mit Stonevall Shackson in te lead.

Stonevall he saw dot flag py dot vindow-sill,
Und stopped righdt off und gave a repel yell.

"Halt!" he cried oudt mit voice loudt und clear;
"Halt! Dond't you see dot flag flapping dere?"

All vas sthill at vonce like mice. "Fire!" he said,
"At dot Yankee flag shust righdt on aheadt!"

Dot leedle flag vas shoot through and through
Py dot Stonevall Shackson's repel crew,

Und it fell from its broken stick do te floor;
But Barbara Fritchie held it oudt vonce more

In te vind righdt ofer dot vindow-sill
Und waved it so—dot way—mit all her vill.

"Dond't shoot your country's leedle flag," she said,
"But shoot, if you must, my gray oldt head."

Vor it vos mine, and te flag vas your own;
But Shackson he shust looked, und said "March on;

Dot voomans vas doo tough do kill dot vay;
March on! Let her die some oder day."

All dot day te tramp of marching repel feedt
Vas heardt along dot Frederick streedt,

Und all dot day dot leedle Yankee flag
Floutedt ofer every 40 repel rag.

Und always ofer Barbara Fritchie's grave
Dot flag of Freedom vill always wave;

Und ever she vill from stars look down
On te Stars und Stribes in Frederick town.

A little lad who is accustomed to say his prayers every night has made it his especial petition for a week past to ask for "pleasant weather." As may be understood, the daily responses have not been very encouraging to him, and when he got to this point in his little prayer last night he stopped short, opened his eyes, and asked his waiting mother in plaintive voice:

"Mamma, do you think God will say 'chestnut' if I ask for that pleasant weather again?"

BURNING OF COLUMBIA.

Who Was Responsible for the City's Destruction?

THE COTTON WAS FIRED

Two Hours Before Sherman's Troops Took Possession.

BELKNAP AND HAMPTON.

Some Interesting Correspondence Between Them.

BY J. S. BOSWORTH, CO. K, 15TH IOWA, WASHINGTON, D. C.

There have been so many conflicting statements regarding the capture, occupation and burning of Columbia, S. C., by General Sherman's army, and as many of these accounts differ very materially from my personal observation and recollection of that event, I am impelled to add my testimony as an eye-witness, besides what I have gathered from conversations with comrades regarding this matter. I also know that there has been a controversy between the commanding Generals on either side as to the responsibility for the destruction of that beautiful city, and, as far as I am aware, the question has never been and never will be settled, because those on either side insists that their version is the correct one. I now propose to give what a humble member of Sherman's army saw, interlarded with what he has heard from time to time expressed by fellow-soldiers.

When Gen. Sherman's army left Atlanta, Nov. 15, 1864, cutting off all communication with the North, and started on his campaign through the enemy's country, he had, perhaps,

THE BEST ARMY

of 60,000 men ever enlisted in this or any other country for the purpose for which they were to be used. It is not the object of this communication to tell of the former achievements of this army, for they have been written by abler pens than mine. Suffice it to say that the army arrived almost intact before Savannah, Ga., captured that city, and then began to look for "new worlds to conquer."

Our illustrious commander soon formed his plans for the march through the Carolinas, and on Jan. 6, 1865, the brigade of which I was a member—Third Brigade, Fourth Division, Seventeenth Corps—left Savannah and embarked on the steamer Louisberg for Beaufort, S. C., where we arrived the next day and immediately began our march into that hotbed of secession.

A few miles outside of Beaufort we encountered the enemy in small force and drove him into his works at Pocotaligo, which works were abandoned without a struggle. Here we halted until Jan. 28, while the final preparations for the ensuing campaign were being completed, and then commenced our weary march through that low and swampy country, where the teams would stick fast in the mud every few minutes, thus rendering our progress slow, even without the enemy, who kept

CONSTANTLY IN OUR FRONT.

Arriving at the Salkahatchie Swamp, the enemy made a stand at the two bridges crossing the same, known as Broxton's and River's bridges, and the Third Brigade, under Gen. W. W. Belknap, was ordered to cross the swamp, the officers and men wading for more than two hours through some 30 streams of water, bog and fen, stumbling over the cypress-knees which abounded; at last making a lodgment on the other side, thus flanking what was supposed to be an impregnable position, and causing the retreat of the entire rebel army opposed to us.

We continued our advance in pursuit of the fleeing enemy from day to day, almost constantly skirmishing with them; building bridges over streams too deep to ford; corduroying the roads almost constantly to allow the artillery and trains to pass. Feb. 16, after a rapid march, the brigade arrived on the south bank of the Congaree River, from which point we had a full view of Columbia, situated on the opposite bank. While in this position my regiment, the 15th Iowa,

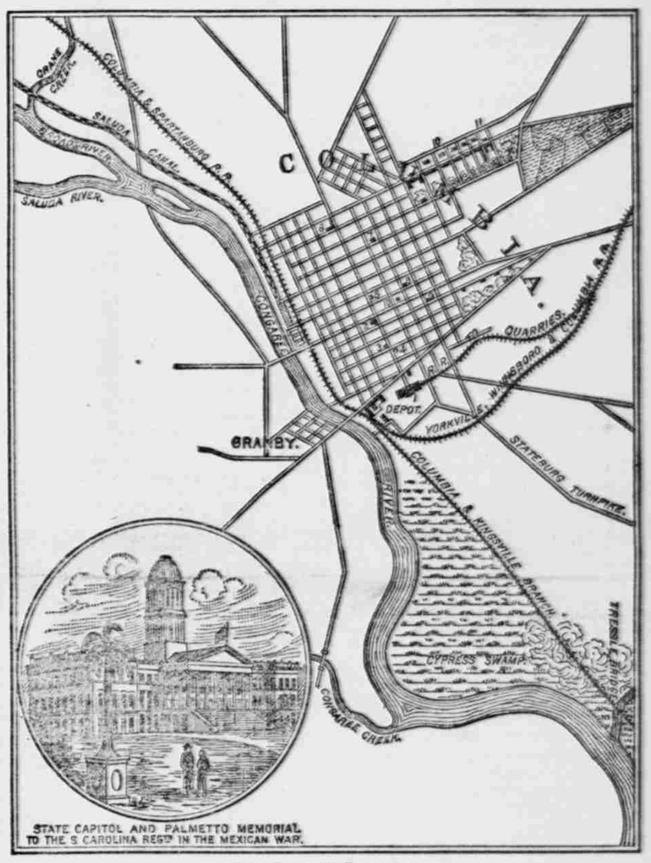
CROSSING THE RIVER.

lost two men mortally wounded by the enemy's sharpshooters, who were screened behind the houses of the city, and, in consequence of this, the 1st Minn. battery, attached to the brigade, was ordered up, and by a

FEW WELL-DIRECTED SHOTS

soon cleared our front of these sharpshooters.

The position occupied by my regiment at this point was just in front of what the rebels called "Yankee City," the place where several thousand Union officers had been confined, but which was now deserted, the enemy having removed the prisoners before our arrival to a place farther north of greater safety.



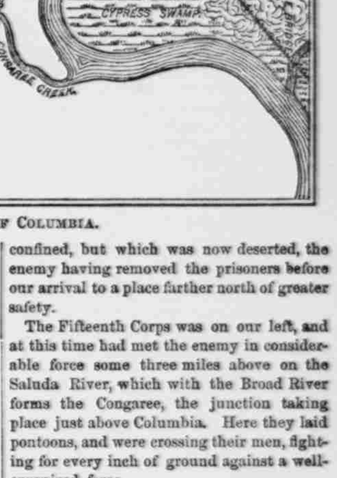
THE CITY OF COLUMBIA.

The Fifteenth Corps was on our left, and at this time had met the enemy in considerable force some three miles above on the Saluda River, which with the Broad River forms the Congaree, the junction taking place just above Columbia. Here they laid pontoons, and were crossing their men, fighting for every inch of ground against a well-organized force.

While this was going on in the Fifteenth Corps' front, we of the Seventeenth Corps were not idle. Lieut.-Col. Kennedy, 13th Iowa, of our brigade, having been informed by Maj. John J. Safely, of his regiment, that there was a flatboat near at hand, requested that he might

BE ALLOWED TO CROSS

the Congaree at this point. Gen. Belknap gave the required permission, and Col. Kennedy, Maj. Safely, Capt. Goodrell, Lieut. McArthur and some 50 men of the 13th Iowa crossed the Congaree in the flatboat before mentioned, and planted the colors of the 13th Iowa upon the proud Capitol of South Carolina.



SCATTERING THE SHARPSHOOTERS.

While this was happening, the Fifteenth Corps had crossed the two rivers some two miles above, and was gallantly fighting its way toward Columbia, driving the rebels at all points. But neither they nor the rebels knew that a lodgment had been made by the Seventeenth Corps at the point immediately opposite Columbia. The municipal authorities had gone out in the direction of the firing to surrender the city as soon as the enemy should cease his endeavors to defend it. Thus the city was surrendered to the